

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) An information device, comprising:

means for storing an encrypted content and a license;

means for receiving grouped device identification information, for receiving key information in response to a transmission of device identification information of the information device and upon a determination that fewer than a predetermined number of information devices are associated with the grouped device identification information, and for receiving the license based on the grouped device identification information; and

means for reading out the license based on the encrypted content, for reading out the grouped device identification information based on the license, for reading out the key information based on the grouped device identification information, and for decrypting the encrypted content based on the key information.

2. (Currently Amended) The information device according to claim 1, wherein a content file the license includes the encrypted content and license identification information identifying the license, and the license includes the grouped device identification information.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for transmitting the transmission to an information server.

5. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 4, wherein the means for receiving receives the grouped device identification information and the key information from the information server.

6. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 4, wherein the means for storing stores the device identification information, which uniquely identifies the information device from the information devices.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 6, further comprising:

means for requesting the information server to delete from the information server the device identification information.

9. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 1, wherein the information devices are owned by one user.

10. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 1, wherein the key information corresponds to a device node key allocated to the information devices, the device node key being a node in a bottom layer among a plurality of node keys in a hierarchical tree structure,

each of the plurality of node keys is encrypted and corresponds to a different node in the hierarchical tree structure, which branches off from a top layer to the bottom layer,

the encrypted content is multiply encrypted by each of the plurality of node keys on a path in the hierarchical tree structure from the device node key to a root key, the root key being one of the plurality of node keys in the top layer of the hierarchical tree structure, and

the means for reading out sequentially decrypts each of the plurality of node keys on the path from the device node key to the root key in the hierarchical tree structure, using the key information as the device node key to obtain the root key, and then decrypts the encrypted content by using the root key.

11. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 10, wherein the encrypted content is encrypted by a content key that is encrypted by the root key, and the means for reading out decrypts the content key by using the root key, and then decrypts the encrypted content using the content key.

12. (Previously Presented) The information device according to claim 1, wherein the encrypted content includes at least one of text data, still image data, moving image data, or voice data.

13. (Currently Amended) An information server that enables a use of an encrypted content, the information server comprising:

means for determining whether fewer than a predetermined number of information devices are associated with grouped device identification information;

means for providing the grouped device identification information and for providing key information, in response to a receipt of device identification information of an information device and upon the means for determining determining that fewer than the predetermined number of information devices are associated with the grouped device

identification information, the grouped device identification information identifying the key information, the key information decrypting an encrypted content; and

means for transmitting a license based on the grouped device identification information, the license identifying the grouped device identification information and being identified by the encrypted content.

14. (Currently Amended) The information server according to claim 13, further comprising:

means for receiving the device identification information from one of the information devices; and ~~means for associating the device identification information with the grouped device identification information.~~

15. (Previously Presented) The information server according to claim 14, wherein the means for determining refuses a device registration request from an information device, after a number of the information devices reaches the predetermined number.

16. (Previously Presented) The information server according to claim 14, wherein the means for determining deletes the device identification information, which is specified by a device registration deletion request from the one of the plurality of information devices.

17. (Currently Amended) The information server according to claim 13, further comprising:

means for determining whether to charge for transmitting the license from the information server, based on whether the grouped device identification information has been

provided by the information server, wherein the means for transmitting transmits the license to the information device in response to a license request from the information device.

18. (Previously Presented) The information server according to claim 13, wherein the information devices are owned by one user.

19. (Currently Amended) An information processing system, comprising:

an information server; and

an information device configured to receive a service from the information server through communication lines, wherein

the information server includes

means for determining whether fewer than a predetermined number of information devices are associated with grouped device identification information;

means for providing the grouped device identification information and for providing key information in response to a receipt of device identification information of the information device and upon the means for determining determining that fewer than the predetermined number of information devices are associated with the grouped device identification information, the grouped device identification information identifying the key information, the key information decrypting an encrypted content, and

means for transmitting a license, based on the grouped device identification information, the license identifying the grouped device identification information and being identified by the encrypted content, and

the information device includes

means for storing the encrypted content, the license, the grouped device identification information, and the key information; and

means for reading out the license based on the encrypted content, for reading out the grouped device identification information based on the license, for reading out the key information based on the grouped device identification information, and for decrypting the encrypted content based on the key information.

20. (Previously Presented) An information processing method implemented by a decryption apparatus, the information processing method comprising:

storing an encrypted content;
receiving grouped device identification information;
receiving key information, in response to a transmission of device identification information of the decryption apparatus and upon a determination that fewer than a predetermined number of decryption apparatuses are associated with the grouped device identification information;
receiving a license based on the grouped device identification information;
reading out, with the decryption apparatus, the license based on the encrypted content;
reading out, with the decryption apparatus, the grouped device identification information based on the license;
reading out, with the decryption apparatus, the key information based on the grouped device identification information; and
decrypting the encrypted content with the decryption apparatus, based on the key information.

21-22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) An information device, comprising:

a memory configured to store an encrypted content and a license;

an interface configured to receive grouped device identification information, to receive key information, in response to a transmission of device identification information of the information device and upon a determination that fewer than a predetermined number of information devices are associated with the grouped device identification information, and to receive a license based on the grouped device identification information; and

a processing unit configured to read out the license based on the encrypted content, to read out the grouped device identification information based on the license, to read out the key information based on the grouped device identification information, and to decrypt the encrypted content based on the key information.

24. (Currently Amended) An information server, comprising:

a processing unit configured to determine whether fewer than a predetermined number of information devices are associated with grouped device identification information; and

an interface configured to provide the grouped device identification information and to provide key information in response to a receipt of device identification information of an information device and upon the processing unit determining that fewer than the predetermined number of information devices are associated with the grouped device identification information, the grouped device identification information identifying the key information, the key information decrypting an encrypted content, and to transmit a license based on the grouped device identification information, the license identifying the grouped device identification information and being identified by the encrypted content.

25. (Currently Amended) An information processing method for an information server, the method comprising:

determining, with the information server, whether fewer than a predetermined number of information devices are associated with grouped device identification information;

providing the grouped device identification information;

providing key information from the information server in response to a receipt of device identification information of an information device and upon determining that fewer than the predetermined number of information devices are associated with the grouped device identification information in the determining, the grouped device identification information identifying the key information, the key information decrypting an encrypted content; and transmitting a license based on the grouped device identification information, the license identifying the grouped device identification information and being identified by the encrypted content.

26. (New) The information device according to claim 6, wherein the means for reading out produces the device identification information using random numbers.

27. (New) The information device according to claim 1, wherein a number of information devices associated with the grouped device identification information is incremented after the transmission of the device identification information.

28. (New) A computer-readable storage medium encoded with computer executable instructions, wherein the instructions, when executed by a processing unit, cause the processing unit to perform a method comprising:

reading out license identification information from a content file, the license identification information identifying a license, the content file storing an encrypted content; after the reading out the license identification information from the content file, reading out grouped device identification information from the license; reading out key information, the key information provided upon fewer than a predetermined number of devices being associated with the grouped device identification information; and after the reading out the key information, decrypting the encrypted content using the key information.